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TAPOL REPORT

Note to all East Timor solidarity groups on the 1990 session of the UN Human Rights Commission

1. Enclosed please find Memos about two important recent developments, the signing of the Timor Gap Treaty between Indonesia and Australia and recent human rights abuses in Dili.

2. Besides the actions proposed in these Memos, we face the urgent task of preparing for the forthcoming meeting of the UN Human Rights Commission which will take place in Geneva from 29 January till 9 March 1990. Following our success in getting a resolution through the Human Rights Sub-Commission last August (see *TAPOL Bulletin* No 95, October 1989), we must now try to get the Commission to adopt a resolution as well. This will need far more intensive lobbying than anything we have done before. *Lobbying governments will be far more difficult that lobbying the experts on the Sub-Commission.*

If a resolution is tabled, it will almost certainly be under Item 13 of the Commission's agenda ['Question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in any part of the world, with particular reference to colonial and other dependent countries and territories.']

Members of UN Human Rights Commission at the 46th Session, Jan-March 1990: (43 member states)

Argentina
Bangladesh
Belgium
Botswana
Brazil
Bulgaria
Canada
China
Columbia
Cuba
Cyprus
Ethiopia
France
Gambia
Federal Republic of Germany
Ghana
Hungary
India
Iraq
Italy
Japan
Madagascar
Mexico
Morocco
Nigeria
Pakistan
Panama
Peru
Philippines
Portugal
Sao Tome and Principe
Senegal
Somalia
Spain
Sri Langka
Swaziland
Sweden
Ukraine
USSR
UK
USA
Venezuela
Yugoslavia

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If your country is a member of the Commission, please write to your foreign ministry asking for a briefing session to discuss human rights developments in East Timor. Inform them of the resolution adopted in Geneva last August and urge them:

a. To instruct their delegation to express concern for the situation in East Timor in their statement to the Commision under Item 13.

b. To instruct their delegation to support a resolution on East Timor.

If you have contact with NGOs which have consultative status with the UN and are likely to attend the Commission meeting, please ask them also to raise East Timor in one of their statements.

Unfortunately, we cannot yet draft resolution as it will require consultation with government delegations who will be requested to table and sponsor the resolution. Please inform us of any progress you make. In particular, we need to know whether your government would be likely to want to table or sponsor a resolution.

21 December 1989

CDPM
DOCUMENTAÇ[redacted]

Additional news:

On 20 November, the French representative at the UN General Assembly Third Committee, New York, speaking for the 12 European Community countries, made a statement about human rights in East Timor, as part of a statement regarding hr around the world. According to Kompas, he said, that the "human rights situation in East Timor has not changed and human rights abuses still continue to occur." Quoting from various sources, he said that although the territory had been opened up in January this year, international human rights organisations had still not been permitted to enter. He expressed the hope that these organisations would be permitted to go to E Timor to carry out an investigation of conditions. His statement also mentioned human rights abuses in China, Burma, Cambodia, Romania, South Africa. El Salvador and other countries.
An Indonesian spokesman denied these charges. REgarding the request by certain organisations to be allowed to visit East Timor, he said that "Indonesia always appreciates the contributions by organisations genuinely concerned with human rights. However, Indonesia hopes that people concerned with human rights should be 'responsible people' who would give 'balanced and objective reports'.
Some time ago, reports Kompas, AI and Asia Watch submitted requests to visit E Timor, but answers have not yet been given. According to well-informed sources, the Foreign Ministry and other departments have no objection to such visits taking place, but the requests are still being considered by BAIS.

NB: I have been promised a copy of this statement. I also have obtained the text of the European Parliament's resolution on E Timor adopted last week. Let me know if you need copies.

Carmel